



American Citizen Services Unit  
U.S. Embassy Santo Domingo  
Warden Message



**TO:** U.S. Citizens

**FROM:** American Citizens Services Unit

**DATE:** November 5, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Hurricane Tomas - Message 4

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The following Warden Message is being transmitted to alert U.S. citizens to the development and progress of Hurricane Tomas.

At 8:00 a.m. the National Hurricane Center issued an advisory stating that Tomas has developed into a Category 1 hurricane. Maximum sustained winds are near 85 mph with higher gusts. A Hurricane Warning is in effect for Haiti. A Tropical Storm Watch remains in effect for the southern coast of the Dominican Republic from the Haiti border eastward to Barahona. A Tropical Storm Watch means that tropical storm conditions are possible within the watch area, in this case within 24 to 36 hours.

The center of Hurricane Tomas will pass near western Haiti this morning and at 8 a.m. was 150 miles west of Port-au-Prince. The storm is moving toward the northeast at about 9 mph with an increase in forward speed expected over the next couple of days. Hurricane force winds extend outward up to 15 miles from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 140 miles, especially northeast through southeast of the center. The National Hurricane Center states that the most significant threat from Hurricane Tomas is heavy rainfall which could produce flash flooding and life-threatening mud slides over Haiti and the Dominican Republic during the next couple of days.

Some additional strengthening is possible today, followed by a weakening trend beginning on Saturday. Tomas is expected to produce total rain accumulations of 5 to 10 inches over much of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, with possible isolated maximum amounts of 15 inches. These rains could cause life-threatening flash flood and mudslides over mountainous terrain.

ONAMET, The Dominican National Meteorological Office, continues to warn boaters that abnormally large waves, between 6 to 8 feet, may occur along the country's Atlantic coast, and waves of 8-10 feet along the Caribbean coast. ONAMET advises that small to medium size vessels along the Caribbean coast from Pedernales to Barahona remain in port. From Barahona to Saona Island vessels should exercise caution and stay close to shore, as should vessels on the Atlantic coast. All recreational aquatic activities should be suspended.

The Dominican Emergency Operations Center (COE) has declared a Red Alert for the the provinces of Pedernales, Barahona, Bahoruco, Independencia, San Juan de la Maguana and Elías Piña, and a Yellow Alert for Azua, Dajabón, Santiago Rodríguez, Montecristi, La Vega Espaillat Hermanas Mirabal, Duarte (particularly lower Yuna), Maria Trinidad Sanchez, and San Cristobal (particularly Villa Altagracia and los Cacaos). A Green Alert is in effect for the provinces of Santo Domingo, the National District, Monte Plata, Sanchez Ramirez, San Jose Ocoa, Monsenor Nouel, Santiago, and Puerto Plata. Red Alerts are declared when a weather phenomenon or other event has a high probability of impacting a specific zone which could result in damage to property, transportation infrastructure, the environment, and people. Yellow (medium probability) and Green alerts (low probability) have been issued for other areas of the country. For details see the COE website at [www.coe.gov.do](http://www.coe.gov.do)

U.S. citizens residing and traveling in coastal areas in this region and floodplains near rivers and creeks descending from mountainous areas of western provinces should be alert to flooding and landslides in rural areas. COE has cautioned those who reside in the mostly rural areas close to rivers, streams, and canals to guard against rising waters and possible overflows. Do not attempt to cross rising rivers, canals, and streams. Rainfall and rising waterways in the provinces of La Vega, Espaillat, Duarte and María Trinidad Sánchez could also cause flash flooding and mudslides.

U.S. citizens are advised that U.S. Embassy personnel have been restricted from traveling to the border area for the remainder of the week. Residents in Santo Domingo and other areas adjacent to the water should remember that storm surge can flood coastal roads quickly. Take appropriate precautions when driving. In the event of local government ordered evacuations, U.S. citizens are advised to follow instructions of civil emergency personnel.

Tropical storms can develop into hurricanes very quickly, limiting the time available for a safe evacuation. Travelers should apprise family and friends in the United States of their whereabouts, and keep in close contact with their tour operator, hotel staff, and local officials for evacuation instructions in the event of a weather emergency. Travelers should also protect their travel and identity documents against loss or damage, as the need to replace lost documentation could hamper or delay return to the United States.

The U.S. Embassy advises all U.S. citizens living in and/or visiting the Dominican Republic take certain basic precautions in preparation of a possible hurricane.

### **Supplies and Preparation:**

- If you are living in the Dominican Republic: Ensure you have adequate supplies of food, water, medications and other essential supplies on hand. It is not unusual for stores and shops to close before, during and after a hurricane. Check your generators and make sure you have an adequate supply of fuel; cut down any dead foliage and remove any debris around your home; secure any items that could become dangerous flying objects (patio furniture, umbrellas, barbeques, etc); have the tools and supplies on hand to secure your house (plywood, nails, shutters, etc). Upper floors in high-rise buildings are at increased risk of windows being blown out, due to the fact that wind speed increases with height.
- If you are a tourist, talk to your hotel front desk to learn about the hotel's emergency plan for a hurricane. Notify your family and friends of your whereabouts and your plans until the storm passes. Be sure to have an adequate supply of necessary prescriptions and medications on hand.

### **During the Storm:**

- Do not go outside, flying debris is lethal;
- Do not watch the storm from beaches as storm surge, rip tides and rogue waves are hazardous.
- Stay inside in an interior room of your residence (bathroom, large closet or pantry). Choose a room with little or no windows that is located away from the exterior wall of the residence;
- Stay off your home/cell phone and radio. Keep all means of communication available for an emergency;
- If a member of your family sustains an injury during the storm, report the injury and degree of severity to the local authorities as soon as possible.

U.S. citizens should monitor local radio, the [National Weather Service](#) and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. For official information from the Dominican Government regarding weather conditions, please visit the [ONAMET](#) website and the [COE](#) website.

The U.S. Embassy will update this warden message if new information becomes available. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

American citizens traveling or residing overseas are encouraged to register with the appropriate U.S. Embassy or Consulate on the State Department's travel registration website at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>.

For any emergencies involving American citizens, please contact the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit of the U.S. Embassy. The Consular Section of the Embassy is located at the corner of Cesar Nicolas Penson Street and Máximo Gómez Avenue, Santo Domingo, D.R.; telephone 809-731-4294; after hours emergency telephone 809-221-2171; ACS unit fax 809-689-6142; e-mail [acssantodom@state.gov](mailto:acssantodom@state.gov); web page [www.usemb.gov.do](http://www.usemb.gov.do).